

**AMERICAN SAILORS SCARCE.**

**Difficult to Man the New War Ships—Reasons for Scarcity.**

Washington dispatches report the inability of the Navy Department to secure men to man the ships now in commission, and it is believed that it is on this account that the Maine and Texas will be unable to take part in the coming maneuvers off Newport. This crisis has threatened our Navy for a great many years, but until the present time the full force of its influence on this country as a naval power has never been realized.

Secretary James Williams of the Atlantic Coast Seamen's Union, when questioned as to the lack of "able American seamen," said:

"From a disinterested point of view I would say that sailors are not treated right, and there is no incentive held out, but, as I am interested, we will cast that behind us and discuss the situation on its merits. In the first place, the enlisted men are all dissatisfied by reason of the fact that the ships are all short-handed, and most of the men have to perform work foreign to the qualifications contained in the enlistment articles. In the second place, we will take the Amphitrite, which is now at Brunswick, Ga. I have in my possession a letter from one of her crew which intimates that every man Jack of them will take a quiet walk from the ship when it reaches this port. And it is so on all the other ships. Why, if it came to a question of war, fully 75 per cent of the crews would desert.

"There is another point that might throw some light on the question, and that is, that a large percentage of the crews merely represent men who have enlisted in order to keep off the streets, and after they have saved one or two months' pay they take French leave. Congress will be called upon at the next session to appropriate a sum sufficient to support 3000 more seamen for the new battle-ships and cruisers; but it will be practically useless, for there are no men left to select from, and right here I will ask the question: Of what earthly use is it to appropriate large sums of money to build ships when it is difficult enough to secure men to operate the present fleet?"

"The ships are so short-handed today that seamen are sent down into the bunkers to pass coal, and, while they receive 33 cents a day for this work, it must be remembered that firemen on coast steamers receive \$40 per month. As a result everybody is dissatisfied.—New York Times.

**WAS A WORKING GUEST.**

**Dickens' Aggravating Experience With Hans Christian Andersen.**

When Dickens first met Hans Christian Andersen in a London drawing-room he asked his fellow novelist to pay him a visit at Gadshill. The invitation was accepted and the guest remained a long time.

In spite of Hans Christian's many merits and good qualities, his very marked peculiarities made him an exceedingly difficult person to entertain. He was extremely sentimental and emotional, and, for no apparent reason, would burst into a flood of womanish tears and rush away to his own room.

A few days after his arrival he rang the bell and asked to see the eldest son of the house. The eldest son was away, and when Dickens himself went to see what his guest desired, he found that Andersen wished the eldest son to shave him, that being the custom of his own country. Dickens explained that in the first place young Charles was absent, and that secondly, it would be an experiment fraught with danger for him to attempt the desired service, as, with the very best intentions, he would probably nearly decapitate his illustrious guest. Under these most untoward circumstances Hans Christian, weeping, betook himself to the nearest barber shop and had his beard attended to professionally.—Philadelphia Times.

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